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ABSTRACT

This evaluation assesses Linking Up, a demonstration program investigating the process and consequences of mentoring. The program matched seventh- and eighth-graders with adult mentors in a small, rural junior-senior high school and an urban junior-senior high school. Student participants were selected to reflect the risk levels of each school's enrollment. Neither the program nor the associated studies achieved the magnitude originally intended because recruiting, training, and matching mentors required more time and staff resources than planned. A process evaluation that monitored the formation of mentoring relationships found that about half of the student/mentor pairs were not meeting regularly because of problems with scheduling, transportation, communication, and/or mentor expectations. The following conclusions are reported: (1) mentors should be recruited in large groups; (2) programs should only focus on at-risk students; (3) mentors need clear goals; (4) the most functional mentor goal is building student competence; (5) mentors need continuing support; (6) programs encounter the same barriers that prevent the development of natural mentoring relationships; (7) mentoring early adolescents needs a context other than career development or "big sibling"; and (8) mentoring is worthwhile. A description of program personnel, a review of the literature on mentoring, and a list of 38 references are appended. (FMW)

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LINKING UP

FINAL REPORT ON A MENTORING PROGRAM FOR YOUTH

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PREFACE

Linking Up is a demonstration program matching adolescents with adult mentors. Its purpose is to facilitate investigations of the process and consequences of mentoring. The program resulted from work by a faculty group in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. (See Appendix A for a list of participants.) After conducting a pilot study in which Cornell students were asked to identify and describe the people who were important to them as adolescents, this group received funding in December, 1986, for a research and demonstration project. Two communities were subsequently chosen and agreed to participate: Dryden, New York, a small village near Ithaca, and Rochester, New York, where one junior-senior high school, John Marshall, was selected. (Since the program began, Rochester has restructured its secondary schools, making John Marshall a senior high school.)

This report describes how the program unfolded and summarizes the lessons it taught. It is written for the program's funders and for others involved in or considering mentoring programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For purposes of the Linking Up program, mentors were defined as unrelated adults who develop a sustained relationship with a younger person in which they act as companion, supporter, teacher, challenger, and role model while engaging together in activities of mutual interest.

Program participants were identified through a multi-stage process that began with a thorough survey of about 200 seventh and eighth graders in each school. Data from the survey and school records were used to categorize all subjects according to their level of academic and psychosocial risk. Invitations to join the program were issued in a manner designed to yield a sample representative of the population's risk levels. Those who accepted the invitation did so with the understanding that half would receive a mentor during the program's first year while the other half, determined randomly, would have to wait a year in order to constitute a control group.

Neither the program nor the research surrounding it achieved the magnitude originally intended, but operating and assessing the program taught some useful lessons. Recruiting, training, and matching mentors proved much more difficult than anticipated, requiring more time and more staff resources than planned. As a result, the program was significantly delayed and never achieved its target of 40 mentor/youth pairs in each community for each of two years. Even after the second-year (control) group was added, the number of pairs actively participating at any one time never exceeded 30.

A "process study" designed to monitor the formation of mentoring relationships revealed that even after the painstaking process of matching was completed, only about half of the pairs were actually meeting regularly -- at least once every month. The target had been two or three meetings per month. Telephone interviews with mentors, youth, and parents helped identify some of

the barriers to regular meetings, which included schedule conflicts, time constraints, transportation problems, communication problems (e.g., unreturned telephone calls), and conflicting or unclear expectations about being a mentor.

A more refined analysis of mentor interviews revealed that mentors' conceptions of their purposes were critical. Level 1 mentors, who saw their primary purpose as developing a relationship with their protégés, were the least likely to persist in meeting regularly. Level 2 mentors spoke of introducing options as a major purpose and were more successful at spending time with their protégés. Mentors categorized as Level 3 emphasized developing character as their main purpose and provided more challenges to their protégés as a result. The most functional purpose was developing competence, Level 4, apparently because it entailed focussing on specific areas of knowledge and skill and doing things that made sense to the youth. Mentors who seemed best able to overcome the frustrations of their task were those who combined competence and character in their aims.

Reflection by staff on the challenges of implementing the program led to the conclusion that recruiting mentors one-at-a-time is costly and inefficient. Our best yield of mentor candidates followed a mailing to Cornell alumni. We believe the key was not that the prospective mentors were Cornell alumni but that they felt a connection with us and with the program that made them more likely to respond.

This experience generated our first recommendation.

1. Mentors should be recruited primarily through employers and organizations who are willing to take on the task of finding volunteers within their ranks rather than one-at-a time.

The following recommendations flowed from the process study as well as the program implementation experience.

2. Mentoring programs should concentrate on youth who need them. In our program youth who seemed less needy (i.e., were at lower risk levels) were also less responsive, presumably because they already had appropriate people and activities in their lives. Given the high cost of operating a mentoring program, young people's needs should be paramount in selecting participants.

3. Mentors need clear goals. Because Linking Up was designed to investigate what can happen between adults and youth, it was quite undirective, which, combined with the absence of obvious need on the part of many youth, left too many mentors uncertain of what they should do and why. Confusion about purpose was associated with failure to meet.

4. Building competence is the most functional goal for mentoring. Mentors concerned with building competence had a clearer idea of what to do and how to act with their protégés than mentors stating other purposes. Challenging activities in many cases provided a foundation for the warm personal relationships that other mentors thought of as the reason for meeting.

5. Mentors need continuing support. Level 4 mentors reported as many frustrations as those in Level 1, but were more likely to attribute them to the program than take personal responsibility for them. Although our semi-professional advisors were expected to provide support to mentors, in many cases they were unable to do so in a timely fashion. We therefore used paid staff more for that purpose, once again increasing the program's costs.

6. Mentoring programs are rooted in paradox. They try to synthesize a relationship that is not available naturally to enough youth, but in doing so

encounter the same barriers of time constraints, geographic and social separation that impede natural mentoring.

7. Mentoring needs a context. Many of the problems and frustrations cited by Linking Up mentors resulted directly from the artificiality of the match. One indication of that artificiality was the need for most mentors to pick up their protégés and go someplace to be together. Workplaces are promising sites for mentoring older teens. The most challenging group is the one we worked with, early adolescents, who are too young to have strong career orientations and too old to be satisfied with a big sibling relationship.

8. Mentoring is worthwhile. Despite the difficulties and in the absence of the kind of outcome data we had hoped to provide, we were convinced by the accounts of activities and relationships given by some mentors, parents, and youth that the process is a powerful and beneficial one. What is at issue is how best to foster it.

RATIONALE FOR THE LINKING UP PROGRAM

"Mentor" has become a familiar term in recent years, especially in connection with the prevention of youth problem behavior. Comparisons between disadvantaged youth who encounter serious problems and those who successfully negotiate the transition to adulthood have discovered that the latter almost always have either a strong parent or nonparental adult who gives guidance and encouragement (Garmezy, 1987; Lefkowitz, 1987; Rutter, 1987; Werner & Smith, 1982; Wilson, 1987). More broadly, mentors have been seen as critical to successful adulthood (Levinson, 1978), especially in business (Roche, 1979; Kram, 1985), and especially for women (Kanter, 1979).

If mentors help explain differences in achievement, then increasing access to mentors might be expected to boost the achievement of disadvantaged groups. Following this logic, conscious efforts have been made to provide mentors for "at-risk" youth, as well as for businesswomen, teachers, and others.

Eugene Lang's "I Have a Dream" program is the most spectacular instance of mentoring disadvantaged youth. Lang has pointed out that his spontaneous guarantee of financial support for a college education to all pupils in the sixth grade class from his former elementary school who graduated from high school was not the sole explanation for their remarkably high success rate. He also took a continuing personal interest in the young people and hired a full-time social worker who shepherded them through the next six years, helping them get the most out of their schooling, plan for the future, and resolve crises in their personal lives.

Inspired in part by this deservedly well-publicized instance, a number of mentoring programs have sprung up, notable among them the Career Beginnings program, now operating in 25 cities. Big Brothers/Big Sisters has been

matching young people with unrelated adults for many years. The majority of little brothers and sisters have been school-age children from single-parent families and, as a result, Big Brothers/Big Sisters has emphasized social support more than issues related to high school graduation and employment. Smaller-scale programs, such as The Learning Web in Ithaca, NY, have also utilized mentors.

Theory and Research on Mentoring for Youth

Few systematic studies have been done of mentoring programs for youth. (See literature review in Appendix B.) Even rarer are investigations of process, as opposed to outcome. With respect to outcomes, evaluations of mentoring programs for disadvantaged youth have generally shown modest positive effects, assessed primarily by protégés' self-reports. None that we have found attempt to relate variations in outcomes to characteristics of the youth involved, or to variations in the mentoring process. Nor do any available studies compare naturally occurring mentors with mentors introduced by a program.

Because mentoring has received little systematic empirical attention and has not yet been adequately conceptualized, the faculty group initially responsible for Linking Up initiated four pilot studies.

Pilot Studies

The studies took a phenomenological approach, asking young people to name the most important people in their lives, to indicate how they were important, and to list activities they engaged in together. The first sample was drawn from Cornell University students, the second from eighth and eleventh graders in an Upstate New York town. The third and fourth studies were done in collaboration with Japanese colleagues, who translated our

questionnaires and administered them to high school and university student samples there. One member of that group, Professor Kunio Wakai of Kobe University, was in residence at Cornell during the fall of 1988 to participate in comparative analyses; another, Professor Sei Matsuda of the Aichi University of Education in Nagoya, spent three months on campus in the fall and winter of 1989.¹

Analyses of responses from the U.S. pilot studies yielded a set of possible ways in which a mentor might function, namely, as teacher, challenger, role model, supporter, and companion. Following is a brief summary of findings.

Question 1. Who are the people who function as mentors for adolescents?

Parents were identified as the most prominent mentors perceived by our subjects. For college students, however, other adults appeared to play increasingly important roles. In addition, many peers, including siblings, were also described in terms of the "functional role" of mentor, and about one-third of the unrelated adults subjects listed as important people were mentors in their functional role (Hamilton & Darling, 1989).

Question 2. Does having a mentor promote adolescents' development?

Darling (1987) found the presence of mentors positively correlated with scores on tests of verbal, quantitative, and reasoning abilities after controlling for other likely influences. This finding was particularly encouraging because mentors might be expected to have greater influence on psychosocial

¹ Japanese sources and a small grant from the Spencer Foundation supported cross-national data analysis.

than on cognitive development. No psychosocial measures were included in the pilot studies.

Question 3. Which adolescents who have mentors benefit from the relationship, and in what ways?

As a step toward answering this question, Hamilton and Darling (1989) found that males were more likely than females to have mentors, as were older adolescents. Males who saw their parents as mentors were more likely to have unrelated adult mentors than males who did not. These distinctions begin to address differences among adolescents, but not in terms of varied outcomes of mentoring because the pilot studies used only limited outcome measures and had sample sizes too small to allow for analysis of multiple sub-groups.

Question 4. What do mentors do that promotes adolescents' development?

Most important from our point of view, the pilot studies suggested a typology of activities young people engage in with their mentors. Many of the activities subjects identified entailed reciprocal interaction with their mentors of two kinds: interpersonal communication, and joint activities. Following are items from the assessment instrument that illustrate the two categories.

Interpersonal Communication

Talking about personal matters you cared deeply about
Talking about family and friends
Talking about ideas, politics, the news, the future, etc.

Joint Activities

Cultural experiences (going to classical music concerts, plays, lectures, museums)
Playing word games
Outdoor activities other than games
Doing organized activities in or out of school

These classes of activities point to some processes that may be occurring within mentoring relationships, though they are not described in sufficient detail to permit us to relate them to differences in outcomes, and they are, like all our pilot study data, retrospective.

The most provocative finding from the Japanese comparative studies is that, compared to U.S. youth, Japanese youth named same-gender peers first among the important people in their lives, listed more of them, and attributed to them more "functional roles." U.S. youth named parents first. In both countries, parents were the most prominent mentors, followed by unrelated adults. In general, although gender differences tended to be consistent across the two countries, cultural differences were even greater. (See Darling, Hamilton, & Matsuda, 1990; Wakai, Bronfenbrenner, Hamilton, Darling, Kondo, Kojima, & Matsuda, 1989; and Matsuda, Wakai, Kojima, Bronfenbrenner, Hamilton, & Darling, 1990.)

Additional cross-national comparisons were provided by an international symposium, held on campus in March, 1988, in which evidence emerged that American youth are more insulated from adult influence than youth in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, West Germany, Norway, or Japan. The American difference cannot be accounted for by contrasting economic and cultural patterns; it appears to reflect instead the absence in the United States of policies and institutions specifically intended to promote the socialization of youth to positive adult roles.²

² The International Symposium was supported by federal funds allocated to Cornell's Western Societies Program as a regional resource center. Proceedings, now in preparation, will be distributed by Cornell University Press. Several of the papers from the symposium were subsequently published in Hurrelmann & Engel (1989).

Basic Concepts

As we analyzed pilot study data and planned the demonstration program, we developed definitions of some of the key terms, which are presented here in somewhat more refined form than at the time when we began to use them.

Mentor

Our conceptual definition of the term, "mentor," is based on the formulation given to Urie Bronfenbrenner by Japanese colleagues, or -- to put it more precisely -- his interpretation and elaboration of ideas expressed and discussed in informal conversation with Japanese colleagues. That reconstruction can be summarized as follows:

A mentor is an older, more experienced person who seeks to further the development of character and competence in a younger person by guiding the latter in acquiring mastery of progressively more complex skills and tasks in which the mentor is already proficient. The guidance is accomplished through demonstration, instruction, challenge, and encouragement on a more or less regular basis over an extended period of time. In the course of this process, the mentor and the young person develop a special bond of mutual commitment. In addition, the young person's relationship to the mentor takes on an emotional character of respect, loyalty, and identification.

While we do not assume that a Japanese definition would apply unaltered in the United States, this one serves as a good starting place for an exploration of what it means to be a mentor in this country. Note that the Japanese definition places skill acquisition at the heart of a mentoring relationship, reflecting a belief, also visible in European knighthood and craft apprenticeship, that character grows naturally in the course of intensive skill training by a wise older teacher.

In the absence of such traditions in the contemporary United States, our definition of a mentor must be broader. While a mentor is older and wiser than his or her protégé, the mentor's specific skills may or may not be the

basis of the relationship. Instead, or in addition, a mentor may assist a young person to acquire competence in a wide range of arenas, including school work and interpersonal relations as well as more discrete skills. It is worth noting that the traditional preparation of craftsmen and knights was embedded in a broader socialization process that not only passed on specific skills but also prepared youth for a way of life.

The time dimension included in the Japanese definition of a mentor is critical. Mentoring takes place consistently and reliably over time. Only when a young person has learned to depend upon and trust an adult will they be able to form an effective mentoring relationship.

The pilot studies used a set of items describing relationships that included a concept of mentoring. Results were factor analyzed, but the mentor factor can be conceptually sub-divided to yield the following components of a mentor's role: teacher, challenger, role model, supporter, and companion.

Teacher

Teaching may involve direct instruction, demonstration, coaching, or a combination of these, but it always entails the mentor's doing something to impart knowledge or skills or to expand the protégé's horizons. It also entails, as a counterpart, the protégé's willingness to be a learner.

Challenger

Goals are the primary locus of challenge. A mentor challenges a protégé by urging him/her to set goals, to plan for their fulfillment, and to evaluate his or her performance in their light. Although a mentor may sometimes impose or propose a goal, s/he should, as much as possible, elicit the protégé's own goals and critique them constructively. In addition, a mentor may call a

protégé's attention to a discrepancy between implicit goals and performance by urging him or her to try harder.

Role Model

Role modeling is a quality of the relationship, not solely of the mentor's behavior. A mentor cannot make him or herself a role model; the young person alone may choose to see the mentor in that way. Nevertheless, mentors should think of themselves as role models and conduct themselves accordingly. This means striving to exemplify in their own behavior the virtues they would like the protégé to adopt, being willing to talk about moral issues and challenges they have faced and how they responded, and talking about the qualities that they admire in others. Another term for this function is "ego ideal."

Supporter

Support may be of two kinds: social support, which the mentor provides by communicating respect, concern, friendliness, and encouragement to the protégé; or instrumental support, which involves providing resources, explanations, advice, and alternative perspectives regarding something the protégé wishes to do. Instrumental support differs from challenge in being requested by the protégé rather than initiated by the mentor.

Companion

Being a companion means spending time with another person, doing things together, and talking. Ideally both parties enjoy of each other's company and communicate that enjoyment to each other. They share news and thoughts. Spending time together is essential to mentoring. Sharing mutually rewarding companionship is a major distinction between mentoring and counseling.

Activity

Following Vygotsky (1978), we view activities with persons who are more knowledgeable and more skilled as a primary motivator of development. From this perspective, activities are sustained behaviors directed toward the achievement of a goal, which allow for progressively increasing complexity. Although mentors may spend time in conversation and serve as informal counselors to their protégés, we expect them to challenge and support young people primarily while engaged in interpersonal communication and joint activities. Ideally those activities are intrinsically motivating and foster development over the long term. Young people obtain immediate satisfaction from them but also acquire new and more adequate knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Joint activities characterize a mentoring relationship; that is, mentors and protégés participate together.

Some activities, like those our pilot study subjects described, are intrinsically challenging and/or supportive, but others may be so to a greater or lesser degree depending upon the mentor's and protégé's verbal interactions during and in connection with them. Watching a football game on TV, for example, can be totally passive, even isolating. But it can also be a highly enjoyable experience filled with fun and sharing. In the presence of a connoisseur, it might be the occasion for intricate analyses of game plans, play selection, and the relative merits of the two teams. Or, watching the game may simply provide an opportunity for serious conversation about other matters.

RESEARCH AND PROGRAM DESIGN

The design of the Linking Up program reflected the purposes of the research in which it was embedded. That research was intended to explore fundamental issues of adolescent development in terms of the connections

between behavior and interpersonal relations. It began with a survey during December, 1987, and January, 1988, of nearly all the seventh and eighth graders in Dryden Central School and in John Marshall Junior-Senior High School, about 200 young people in each, which tapped a wide range of psychosocial phenomena and elicited a detailed description of each subject's social network. (The only young people not surveyed were those for whom parental permission was unavailable or who were absent and could not be located on subsequent days.) School records were also made available for all survey participants.

The original research design entailed assessment of the entire sample at three points: the baseline; one year later, after the treatment group had been mentored for year; and two years later, after the control group had been mentored. This design would have created four groups for comparative purposes. Comparing the treatment group with the control group would provide a stringent test of the effects of mentoring. Assessing the control group a year later, after they had received the treatment, would constitute a replication of that test, using the control group's pretest status and the first-round treatment group's gains as points of comparison, as well as comparing them with the baseline sample not involved in the program. That baseline sample, in turn, could be divided according to which of the young people in it found a mentor "naturally" over the two-year course of the study. The impact of those natural mentors could then be compared with that of program mentors and with the sub-sample that did not find a mentor either way.

Sadly, this well-conceived research design could not be carried out, both because of problems in implementing the program and because sufficient funding was not available. However, two dissertations and several conference

papers have been written using the baseline data. (See Munsch, 1988, 1989a, 1989b; Foster-Clark, 1989a, 1989b; Foster-Clark & Blyth, 1989).

Participant Selection

The baseline data provided a measure of each subject's competence (or, conversely, level of risk) in both academic and psychosocial realms. In order to provide treatment and control groups that represented the range of competence levels, each subject was rated as either high or low in each of these two domains, creating a four-cell matrix: low psychosocial and low academic; low psychosocial and high academic; high psychosocial and low academic; high psychosocial and high academic. (See Figure 1.) Those in the first group were considered to be at the highest risk of becoming involved in problem behavior; those in the fourth group were thought to be at the lowest risk.

Figure 1.

DEFINING THE FOUR COMPETENCE GROUPS

		ACADEMIC COMPETENCE	
		Low	High
		Group 1	Group 2
PSYCHOSOCIAL COMPETENCE	Low	Low Psychosocial Low Academic	Low Psychosocial High Academic
	High	Group 3	Group 4
		High Psychosocial Low Academic	High Psychosocial High Academic
	High		

Because one of the purposes of the demonstration was to assess the interaction of program impact with initial risk level (i.e., to determine whether the program was more beneficial to those most or least at risk), these

cells became the basis for inviting young people who had participated in the survey to join the Linking Up program. Invitations were issued in a manner designed to assure representation from across the risk/competence spectrum. However, neither the numbers of persons in the cells nor acceptance rates were equal. As a result, the invited group contained more youth from the low-low than from the high-high competence group. In addition, the high psychosocial, low academic group was small.

Invitations were issued during a series of small-group meetings, mostly after school, in which the program was described and in which youth were told that agreeing to participate would give them an equal chance of being assigned to the treatment group -- to be matched with a mentor right away -- or being assigned to the control group -- which would mean having to wait a year to be matched with a mentor. In short, participants in the program were those young people from two schools who were first arrayed on a competence/risk spectrum, then invited to participate, and who accepted that invitation. Not all of them had a strong or specific need for a mentor.

The original time schedule, which called for an almost immediate implementation of the Linking Up program following the baseline survey, proved unrealistic. Originally, each community was to have 40 mentoring pairs and 40 youth in a control group. The control group members would receive mentors after one year. Identifying risk levels, inviting participation, and recruiting mentors all took far more time than expected. In addition, it was difficult to arrange times when mentors could be oriented and trained and times when mentor, youth, parent, and the program coordinator could all sit down together and set out initial conditions and expectations for the program. A few matches were made during the summer of 1988 as a pilot effort, but

matching of youth with mentors began in earnest in the fall of 1988, by which time eligible youth were eighth and ninth graders, ages 12-15. In recognition of the difficulties encountered, the target number of first-year matches was reduced from 40 to 30 in each community.

Implementing the program proved to be far more of a challenge than anticipated. The resulting delays meant that most members of the treatment group were not matched, as planned, during the spring of 1988 and the schedule had to be prolonged, with the mentoring of control group members put off until fall 1989. In fact, it was not until late in 1989 that the matching process was essentially completed, by which time a large number of youth who had asked to participate were no longer interested. Thus the program was much smaller and much more varied in duration and intensity than planned. The total number of matches ultimately made was 44 in Dryden and 27 in Rochester.

Mentors and youth were expected to meet at least twice monthly for a total of eight hours or more each month. Mentors' roles were defined for them in the terms stated above. Youth were told that the program would give them a chance to spend time with an older friend who can do things with them, help them set goals and solve problems, and just talk together. In contrast to mentoring programs stressing academic achievement and career planning, no specific activities or topics were prescribed. The plan was for mentors and protégés to get acquainted through a group orientation program, then identify mutual interests and spend time together pursuing them. Next they were to take on one or more challenging tasks -- planning strategies, carrying them out, and then assessing their performance.

Mentor/protégé matches were voluntary. Either party was given permission to terminate a relationship, though we asked both to maintain it through

a month-long trial period. Because our pilot studies found that female adolescents had predominantly female mentors while virtually no male adolescents had female mentors, we matched by gender whenever possible.

Mentor Recruitment, Selection, and Training

We described mentors as "ordinary effective adults who care." They are not necessarily better educated or more successful than other adults. But they have made decisions about their education, their work, personal relationships, and how they use their leisure time. They do not necessarily have formal training or previous experience in teaching, counseling, or working with youth. But they are the kind of people others look to for advice and assistance. They are people who can listen to others, who are informal leaders in their workplaces or communities. And they are concerned about young people.

Differences in the two communities required different recruitment strategies. In Dryden, the small town, word-of-mouth, personal recommendations, and voluntary organizations were key channels for identifying likely candidates. The greatest response to mentor recruitment came from a letter mailed to all Cornell alumni in the area. We concluded that it was not necessarily a matter of Cornell graduates being more likely to volunteer, but that the connection we had with Cornell made them readier to join. In the city of Rochester, we hoped to find more mentors through employers, but few were found that way.

In both communities, when prospective mentors came forward, they received a thorough explanation of the program and of what mentors were expected to do. Those who remained interested were interviewed both for screening purposes and to obtain information for use in matching them with

youth. Following selection, mentors received an orientation that reminded them of their own adolescent experiences, suggested some strategies for building a relationship, and explained the program's goals and their obligations. However, mentors were given only general direction regarding what they were to do with their protégés in order to maximize the exploratory value of the research. As will become clear below, lack of clear direction had some deleterious effects on the program.

As a result of our efforts, we concluded that recruiting mentors one-at-a-time was not an efficient strategy. Literally thousands of people saw or heard our appeals, some from multiple sources. Yet less than a hundred responded in any way. Less than half of those persisted through the orientation and screening phases to be matched. Hence, the yield for individual contacts was quite small.

Two alternatives suggest themselves. One is to recruit organizations rather than individuals. Both voluntary organizations and workplaces are good candidates. Following this strategy implies gaining organizational commitment to supply a certain number of mentors, or even take on a program, leaving the recruitment of individual members up to the organization's leadership. The other strategy is to target specific individuals with distinctive characteristics and ask them to work with specific youth. This is what The Learning Web does, finding adults with skills that youth wish to learn, and their yield for recruiting efforts is very high, perhaps one mentor for every three or four contacts.

To assist mentors, we instituted a system of advisors, who were to provide them with continuing support and, when necessary, instruction. Borrowed from the British Transition to Working Life program (TWL, see Grubb

Institute, 1981), the advisor is a professional with advanced skills in human relations who works closely with four to six mentors. In effect, the advisor is a mentor to the mentors, encouraging and supporting them, providing guidance and information, assisting with training, and making referrals to resource people and agencies when needed. The advisors were asked to call or meet with each mentor every two weeks and convene informal gatherings of their mentors once a month. They also linked mentors to the program coordinator, relaying information and concerns in both directions.

In the TWL program advisors were professionals who volunteered their time. We found potential advisors reluctant to make such a commitment and offered a modest stipend of \$500 per year for a caseload of four matches. Although this did not adequately compensate advisors for the time we asked them to spend, it did make them feel better about accepting the assignment.

THE PROCESS STUDY

The research and demonstration project was conceived as a means of shedding light both on the impact of mentoring and on the process. The importance of process loomed larger as the project went forward, first because of the barriers, delays, and problems encountered, which cried out for illumination, and second because when the original experimental/survey design could not be completed, the process study remained our best hope of learning from the program.³

Data regarding the development of mentoring relationships were sought to help us generate principles to guide Linking Up and other mentoring programs. Freedman (1988) pointed out that sometimes an adult and a youth who are

³ Support for the process study came from the Foundation for Child Development. A contract with Public/Private Ventures supported analysis and reporting of the data.

matched by a program simply do not develop a relationship, and that when relationships do develop they take on varying levels of intensity. While he claimed that we need not attribute success or failure to some mysterious "chemistry," he did not state any general principles for optimizing the matching process. Flaxman, Ascher, and Harrington (1988) concluded their thoughtful treatment of the theory and practice of matching in mentoring programs with the recommendation that little time and effort be devoted to the process because so little is known about it. They suggested instead making initial matches with the understanding that they can be changed if they do not work out.

Our process study relied heavily upon reports by mentors and young people themselves. The nature of a mentoring relationship limits the feasibility of outsiders observing it. Moreover, young people's perceptions of their mentors and their relationship are crucial to a program's effectiveness.

Initial Data Collection and Findings

From February through August of 1989, researchers collected three data sets and shared preliminary codings and analyses with project staff. These data sets included 108 monthly phone interviews with 32 protégés, 51 conference reports submitted by 9 advisors after their monthly meetings with 24 mentors, and 17 phone interviews with parents. This sample represents the pairs that were active during the time of the data collection. Many more matches were made afterwards.

The most surprising finding was that most pairs were meeting less frequently than expected. More than half had gone for a month or more without meeting during the time since they were matched. This was particularly distressing because the matches had been difficult to arrange, and the

projected enrollment of 30 pairs in each community was not in sight. Prospects for learning about the development of mentoring relationships seemed especially bleak, as the treatment group was considerably smaller than planned and many in the treatment group were not receiving the treatment. Perhaps the most discouraging finding was that the youth in the neediest group seemed to be meeting least often.

This revelation from the protégé phone interviews was startling; we wondered what accounted for it, and why other pairs were meeting more frequently. These questions, in the context of strong concern about the program's health, led us to shift the study's purpose. Rather than trying to understand and trace the formation of mentoring relationships, we sought instead to understand why so many pairs did not seem to be working out. The study became an exercise in formative evaluation, driven by the immediate need to improve the program.

With this purpose in mind, one group of researchers began a content coding and analysis of protégé phone interviews, attempting to discover in the protocols (i.e., write-ups of the interviews) instances of mentoring and to categorize those instances or "moments" into different types of mentoring, in order to substantiate and modify the mentors' roles cited above. The results surprised and disappointed the program staff, because they yielded few instances of mentors acting as challengers. When youth described their activities with a mentor, the mentors' roles were usually coded as companion, supporter, or teacher. Many of the instances of teaching were exploratory, involving initial exposure to a new situation rather than developing competence. From the protégés' testimony, it appeared that what mentoring was going on was relatively low-level.

Advisors' reports of their conferences with mentors (which were sparse) and phone interviews with parents revealed that mentors and parents were often unclear about the program's purpose. Mentors and parents also reported growing lists of frustrations. Finding that many pairs met infrequently, that the mentoring reported by youth was rather unintensified, and that many mentors and parents were both unclear about the program's purposes and frustrated made us quite eager to talk with mentors themselves to understand how they thought about mentoring. As the fall of 1989 approached, this became a particularly urgent task. We needed to make modifications and to clarify the program's purposes in order to help program staff restructure program goals and support systems to make the program more viable for the new wave of matches scheduled to begin in October.

Instrument Design: Mentor Phone Interviews

We developed interview guides to understand how mentors think about what they do with their protégés. A key section of the interview was the mentor's description of the program purpose. To enable mentors to articulate their purposes, we began the interview by having them list concrete activities they did with their protégés. Using these activities as a springboard, we then asked mentors to reflect on what the main purposes of those activities were and how those purposes were decided. Next, we probed mentors about their relationships with their protégés; about the frequency of meetings with their protégés; and about their satisfactions and frustrations as mentors. Although interviewers saved their questions about satisfactions and frustrations until the end, mentors often spoke of them spontaneously in the context of an issue that surfaced earlier in the interview. Interviewers used probes extensively to get details and clarifications about meanings.

Data Collection

Financial and time constraints demanded rapid data collection and processing. We had to collect data in an efficient, cost-effective manner, and process it quickly. Under these circumstances, rigorous phone interviews were the method of choice. Two interviewers conducted 27 interviews with mentors over a 15-day period. To complete the data set, four additional interviews were completed over the next several months. Interviews lasted between five minutes and an hour, the mean being 24 minutes. As they listened to mentors' responses, interviewers took notes to jog their memory when writing up protocols immediately after the interview. This discipline was similar to that of ethnographers writing up field notes after a lengthy field observation. Recall was aided by immediate write-up of the interview. Interviewers found the mentors overwhelmingly open and generous. Several mentors said they hoped their reflections could help others understand mentoring for future programs.

Data Coding

Mentor interview data were processed in several stages. The first stage involved reading through the protocols to modify working hypotheses that stood behind the interview framework. Several issues were now less fuzzy: frustrations could be listed and connected; unclear purposes emerged as a critical problem; mentors' attitudes about program supports (e.g., advisors) and styles of using or not using them surfaced. This information enabled the program director and coordinators to redesign key components of the fall, 1989 training, orientation and program supports for new mentors and their protégés and parents. That redesign emphasized the importance of clarifying the purpose of the match and jointly setting goals. The new training devoted less

time to broad issues such as adolescent development and more time to specific problems such as what a mentor should do when a protégé fails to answer telephone calls.

A second stage of the data coding was a lengthy inductive generation of categories to define mentoring purposes and frustrations. A reliability check performed on the first set of categories revealed many ambiguities in definitions and groupings. Some apparently superficial ambiguities revealed serious weaknesses in the categories and their definitions.

A third stage of coding led to the current conception of sequential levels of mentoring. This insight made it possible to redefine the categories and recode the data. A reliability check of each pair's new coding by two researchers proved the system functional, and added sharper distinctions as well as several new definitions.

Data Analysis

Once a reliable coding system was in place, several different types of analyses could begin. A chart provided a detailed summary of information on each case. Subcategories coded within each level were cross-indexed with case variables such as month of interview, month the pair terminated, mean number of meetings per month, protégé's risk level, and number of frustrations stated by the mentors. The cases were listed by levels of mentor purposes.

This chart facilitated the selection of five cases to explain the levels of mentoring. The cases illustrate typical experiences of other pairs coded in the same level. Key moments of mentoring in these five cases, with their dilemmas, joys and frustrations, represent generic issues addressed by other mentors.

After writing each case study, the researcher compared the case to patterns of other cases at the same level and at other levels. (See Table 1.) The levels of mentoring were compared to the number of months in the program. Protégés' competence levels were analyzed in comparison with number of months in the program, gender, rural/urban location, mentor frustrations and developmental levels, and mean number of meetings per month. Finally, recommendations for program management based on these analyses were considered. The results of these efforts follow.

Levels of Mentoring Purposes

The four levels reflect what mentors said when asked why they did the things they reported doing with their protégés. Hence, they reflect different purposes in the minds of mentors. The levels are as follows:

Level 1 Building a Relationship

At this level mentors talk about the purpose of their meetings with their protégés as helping the two develop a relationship. Some mentors said the purpose is to spend time together or have fun; another group said that the meetings help them get to know the youth or each other; for some mentors, the meetings provide an opportunity to talk; others use the meetings to discover or pursue the youth's interests.

Level 2 Introducing Options

Mentors at this level want to introduce more career and life possibilities to their protégés. They talk about their desire to open doors or widen horizons, develop awareness of possibilities for women, meet their professional friends, or socialize with graduate student friends.

Level 3 Developing Character

Some mentors refer to purposes like "building self-confidence" or "forming ideals and values." Such mentors strive to use incidents that occur during their various activities as teaching moments to build character.

Build self-confidence. Mentors help youth appreciate their individual talents and attributes. Mentors may also help youth assert their values.

Form ideals and values. Rather than structuring opportunities or providing information to reach educational or career goals, the mentor here works on ideals and values that might help influence the articulation of those goals as possibilities. The mentor may also work on generic issues such as what is good and bad, the development of a moral sense, respect for the environment, hard work to earn rewards, and honesty.

Level 4 Developing Competence

Mentors working at this level talk about helping their protégé plan for the future, about teaching basic academic skills, or about teaching other skills.

Plan for the future. Mentors have intentions or have started to help their protégé with their education or career goals. They might give information or provide a structure where they can make some progress. Examples might include scheduling appointments, visiting a work site or learning about the steps involved in becoming certified for a particular job.

Teach basic academic skills. Mentors intentionally strive to improve the conversational, reading, or math skills of their protégés.

Teach other skills. Mentors promote skill development in numerous areas, such as animal care, volunteer work, physical fitness, outdoor adventures, and in the arts and crafts, as well as learning how to plan a project. Mentors may also seek to develop interpersonal skills such as problem solving.

The four levels are hierarchical in the sense that mentors identified in one of the higher levels usually also talked about the lower levels, but those at the lower levels did not mention higher-level purposes. The level to which a mentor is assigned represents the highest level she or he referred to when questioned. Conscious of the dangers of making inferences about reality solely on the basis of mentors' statements in an interview, we further subdivided each level into "aspiration" and "implementation." Mentors spoke both about what they hoped to accomplish and what they had already done. Aspirations should be taken seriously because they indicate at least the mentor's awareness of what she or he might do. However, a mentor's statements about what has actually transpired should be given more weight, even though

they may not be totally accurate. Hence, implementation represents a higher level of accomplishment than aspiration.

Level 1 - Randy and John - Building a Relationship

Randy describes his meetings with his protégé, John, over the last four months as "Driving around, cruising the area, familiarizing ourselves with each other." He added that they have visited each other's homes several times, chatted with John's parents, played ping-pong, and frequented the video arcade.⁴

Informally, the purpose of our activities has been for me to become a part of his spectrum. I have tried to be a down-to-earth type person with him and do regular things with him. I hope to help him be more comfortable with me as an outsider. He's very attached to his family. Our relationship is pretty distant, very distant in fact.

Randy explains that these purposes have not changed over the months. He speaks about the purposes of the activities as building a relationship, meaning getting to know one another and becoming important to one another. Randy adds that it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue meetings. During the first month they met twice. In the following months they would meet once or less. Randy explains that his frustrations are twofold. It is difficult to schedule meetings, and it is difficult to figure out what to do when meeting.

Over the months this purpose has unfortunately not changed. John's disinterest has grown astronomically. It makes it difficult for me to continue. I have failed to find anything to attract his interest. This is very frustrating, too. I always try to drive our activities by his interests but all I get from him when I ask what he would like to do is "I don't know." So I try to think of things I would have liked to do when I was 12 or 13. However, he never affirms a desire to do what I suggest

⁴ The following indented passages are lightly edited selections from interview protocols. The interviews were not recorded verbatim, but the mentors' words and mode of expression are preserved as closely as possible.

either. All he says is "I want to go home." (Do you know why he joined the program?) Yes. His mother mentioned the program to him and he agreed to participate. Now he is very resistant but his mother is not allowing him to quit.

Having to find interesting things to do together makes Randy uncomfortable with his role in the relationship.

I would prefer the purpose to move to a situation where we can learn from each other versus me trying again to come up with something that might interest him. I would not say I am dissatisfied, but I would say I am frustrated and disappointed.

It appears that the initial role of "companion," inferred from Randy saying he wanted to be part of the youth's spectrum (of relationships), has evolved into "entertainer." This latter role seems to increase the mentor's frustrations, for he feels that the onus is on him to figure out what to do in their time together. Randy says he would rather they "learn from each other," but because of John's non-participation he doesn't feel able to act as a teacher or a supporter. And Randy perceives himself as competing with the youth's family relationships. After five months, the program coordinator helped Randy and John terminate their relationship.

Randy's case illustrates several patterns in purposes, frustrations, number of meetings per month, and rate of termination experienced by seven other pairs in which the mentor referred to the primary purpose of the mentoring activities as building a relationship, which places them in Level 1. (These eight cases represent 26 percent of the 31 cases analyzed.)

All eight of these pairs had been meeting for six months or less. Two pairs had been meeting six months, three for five months, one for four, one for three, and one for one month. Pairs functioning at this level had a very high termination rate: 75 percent ended within the eight-month period covered by the study.

Seven mentors talked about getting to know the youth as the main purpose. An eighth mentor listed having fun and spending time together as the purpose of meetings with the youth. Two mentioned that they use the meetings to find out the youth's interests.

The frustrations that the eight mentors described (a mean of 2.3 each), can be grouped in two categories: meetings with protégés and mentoring role conflicts. Regarding meetings, all eight mentors voiced concern about the amount of contact they have with their protégé. Level 1 mentors had the lowest mean number of meetings per month, 0.84. They talked about scheduling conflicts, their own and their protégés' time commitments taking priority, and calls that the protégés did not return. Three mentors mentioned difficulties generating interesting activities, and one mentor noted incompatible interests as a drawback.

The purpose of building a relationship implicitly places the mentor in the role of companion or friend. (It should be noted again that this mentor role was ubiquitous. All mentors who spent time with their protégés performed it.) Four mentors described frustrations stemming from other roles. Two talked about the counselor role, feeling uncomfortable about their problem-solving skills in dealing with their protégés' problems. Two mentors expressed frustration that they were not performing the role of teacher. Two other mentors felt they were being trapped into the role of entertainer, trying to provide a good time to the youth.

None of the mentors at Level 1 attributed their problems to the program's structure. They tended to internalize the problems, blaming themselves rather than viewing problems as resulting from programmatic features or structures.

Level 2 - Sarah and Karen - Introducing Options

Sarah wants to open options for her protégé, in particular, to develop an awareness of the possibilities for women in today's world.

We never got to the point of establishing a particular goal. An agenda of my own was to demonstrate in my own way what was possible for a woman in today's world. I took her to my workplace. She helped in a fund raiser for an organization I belong to. She never arrived at a particular focus. Every time she arrived at it, it wasn't possible for her to enunciate it. We went to "Gorillas in the Mist", and I also gave her the book to read. (Did she understand your goal about possibilities for women?) I'm not sure. I can't recall that I ever stated it myself. We never talked about it. I never thought I would be placed with a girl. But in today's world we have liabilities to deal with. I wanted her to explore what's possible for a woman.

For the past year, Sarah and her protégé, Karen, usually went on once-a-month outings together. They attended a concert, visited a museum, played racquetball, and went out for ice cream. Karen said that if her mentor doesn't have an idea of what to do together, she might suggest an activity listed in the newspaper, and if she doesn't find anything then they decide together what to do. The protégé also stated in several phone interviews that her mentor was "real easy to talk to" and that she "felt really comfortable around her." This relationship was a source of companionship for the youth, but began to make the mentor feel that it was not reciprocal.

There was never a lot coming back on what Karen would want to do. It is probably more common today that a teenager is apt to be in a situation where they expect to be entertained. You always hear the question: "What's there to do today?" And we were strangers in that we did not know each other.

I was really like a "maiden aunt." I gave treats and special things. In that aspect, it was all me who had to decide what to do. I was "an entertainer." I didn't mind, because I could pick the things I wanted to do. But it was a little frustrating. It made it feel more like an obligation. It was bad there wasn't more warmth, or mutuality.

It is difficult to be on the same plane as you would with someone else where you had experienced a natural pairing. It was

very frustrating to me. Maybe I expected too much. Our meetings were not as regular as they should have been. There were a couple of periods where my commitments prevented me from spending time with Karen. This may have also prevented a bonding. Now it has been six weeks and we haven't seen each other.

Meetings became less frequent and harder to plan as Sarah's and Karen's interests proved incompatible. Sarah felt that there was no purpose other than to participate in the program. She even felt that the relationship was contrived.

Not having a specific focus, I cannot say the purpose did change. There was no purpose other than to participate in the program. (Does this lack of purpose seem adequate to you?) I don't know if it is OK. Back in the beginning, something I imagined was neediness. I am not sure this person needed me. It might have been more productive with activities if I had been involved with a person who needed these things. She did new things with me, but I was not sure they were experiences her parents couldn't afford to give her. If a kid is less likely to go to special events at the university, or a movie, maybe I would have felt more necessary and like an extraordinary opportunity. Regarding purposes and goals, I think it is good to have goals. And if we ever reached them, maybe it would have provided a more meaningful experience. But I would have had to force this individual. And it wasn't up to me to force this person to explore.

Even though I tried to offer choices, I wasn't successful. (Why?) In the first few meetings it was very difficult. She could not even decide on a flavor of ice cream. I don't really know. I also decided some of the difficulty was the artificiality of being thrown together. There was no shared or mutual relationship on which to build. We don't have the same parameters. We are not mother and child, not contemporaries, not an aunt, not a teacher and student. We were breaking new ground. We didn't find one another in an event. There was a certain artificiality in being thrown together, and that disappointed me. I would try to pick up threads from previous meetings. She never asked about me, like someone does in a normal friendship. I'm not sure why. Maybe I was looking for more than there is at age 14. My advisor and I often talked about what I was doing to get feedback from Karen about what to do, how we decided to do things, our focus and goals.

Sarah suggested that part of the problem with her relationship may be contained within the program expectations rather than in just the way she

herself has been handling the meetings. She thought the program might not have set forth clear enough expectations about the purposes of the relationship. She felt ambivalent about being an entertainer and counselor. Yet she did not think the advising system had offered anything in its place. She says nothing about the roles of teacher and challenger because there is no context of activities within which she can begin to build Karen's competence or character.

I do think a needs-based expectation would reinforce the mutuality of the relationship. It is easier for mentors to do something for someone who needs it, maybe a youth who did not have much money, was from a single-parent home, or needed a particular experience. I don't want to exclude the middle class either. I would have liked to be a more enriching element in the protégé's life. In a one-to-one relationship, a person can stop and listen. There were good things, several confidences, I felt good that this person was trusting in me. But the idea of the program is kind of one-sided. We should be able to do something with someone.

Sarah and Karen's case highlights several characteristics of the other four cases at Level 2. The pairs met a mean of 1.01 times per month. Two of the five pairs ended the relationship, one after four months, the other after 9 months. Four of the five mentors mentioned frustrations with the meetings, with their role and/or with the advising system. These four mentors listed a mean of two problems with the meetings, namely contact with their protégé, defining interests, and incompatibility. Three mentors experienced role conflicts as "entertainers." Two mentors wished they were more of a "confidant" to their protégés. And three mentors talked about frustrations with the advising system, stating that contact with program staff was infrequent, or that program expectations were unclear.

All five mentors coded at Level 2 were female. One other mentor, in addition to Sarah, talked specifically about developing awareness of the possibilities for women in today's world.

Level 3 - Janet and Barbara - Developing Character

Janet and Barbara get together about once a month, and spend a lot of that time together talking about issues in Barbara's life.

Basically, she usually comes to my home, we go out to dinner, we go shopping, or to a fair. Her sister came with her one time. She came over when my children were in town. Mostly we have girl talk, and talk about movies, and that kind of thing. She has lots of boyfriends, and we spend time on that.

It appears that these continuing conversations with Janet have had a significant impact on Barbara's character. Janet believes that Barbara's increased self-confidence enables her to assert new values that are at odds with a peer environment that includes teenage drinking and driving as well as teenage pregnancy and parenthood. These values are illustrated in her attitudes and behaviors toward friends who are in less fortunate circumstances than hers. Janet describes these changes that she has perceived in Barbara:

Somehow, Barbara has gained more self-confidence about why she is in certain situations. I feel she has come a little ways, and that she is thinking about why she's in relationships rather than why she has to have them. Like her friends; Barbara has now dropped one friend because of drunk driving.

Barbara also talks about a friend who has a baby and is not married. It was very exciting for her, but now it is not as wonderful as Barbara originally thought. We've shared a lot.

Barbara has developed reservations about the behaviors of friends who drink and drive. She no longer sees her former tolerance of such situations as a necessary or even acceptable condition of friendship. She has begun to have the courage to say no. She is beginning to believe she can get more out of life by making choices rather than going along with the crowd, and adapting to the disasters that ensue. Her newfound reservations about adolescent pregnancy and parenthood also open opportunities for future self-direction.

Janet's effort, however, is not without costs to her. She expresses many frustrations that relate to meetings with Barbara, her mentoring role and the advising system. Not only is it difficult to identify Barbara's interests, but Janet now thinks that their interests may be incompatible. The program's open-ended expectations are at odds with Janet's style of working on more concrete goals and purposes. This results in a feeling of being an entertainer for Barbara, the same frustration Sarah expressed in the previous case.

[The match] was a setup more than a spontaneous situation. This was a setup. We were expected to create a commonality. Because we don't have an interest, we find it hard to work on a project. So we may just develop a friendship. With my job, there are a lot of youth who come to me. One recently decided she wanted to go to college. Things [like that] happen from interests, whereas this [match] was a setup and every meeting together is like starting over again.

My whole adult life I have spent [more focused in relationships]. I am finding it hard to create a purpose, other than both of us want to be in this program. That is true for me in life in general. I enter things for a purpose. It's hard for me to decorate a room from scratch, but I can work on a room and change it around. It's the same for me with this program -- not from scratch. Yet I don't have time to give it anymore. I said I did at first. I feel badly; I don't want to give it up. If an interest had been there other than being part of the program, then maybe that would have happened. I can find things to do, but it's not natural. I'm not having a ball; I feel bad, but I also say this is part of what they will learn in the research project. Maybe I'm too goal-oriented. I want too much to happen too fast.

While the development of character is unquestionably valuable, it is extremely difficult to do in isolation from concrete activities that build on developing interests. Unfortunately, Janet seems to undervalue the impact of what she is doing when she says they "just develop a friendship." This self-deprecation takes a personal toll, leaving her uncertain whether to continue.

I have to create all the situations. And I question if it should continue. I'm not ready to give it up yet.

Other mentors at Level 3 also attempted to develop their protégés' self-confidence. One mentor used events in his protégé's life to help him appreciate his individual talents and attributes, such as when the youth was chosen as sweatboy at a basketball game. Although the youth initially downplayed this event, the mentor helped him see it as an accomplishment. Another mentor tried to increase his protégé's self-confidence by letting him teach the mentor the rules of the many games they watch together, and engage in evaluations of the plays.

A couple of other mentors tried to form ideals and values in their protégés. One mentor encouraged honesty and respect for the environment by using concrete situations to teach moral lessons. One incident involved throwing trash from the car window; another involved discussing illegal uses of a parking pass. Another mentor wanted to attend a disability basketball game with his protégé, to help his protégé become aware of "how the handicapped can cope well in life."

Level 4 - Suzanne and Claire - Developing Competence

Suzanne and her protégé, Claire, have been meeting about every three weeks for five months. Developing competence emerges as a theme underlying the activities that they undertake in their meetings together. The competencies are in very diverse areas, such as planning for the future, learning basic academic skills, and learning other skills. Suzanne explained how she helps Claire plan for the future by structuring opportunities to learn about what's involved in becoming a veterinarian.

She's interested in becoming a veterinarian so we went to the university vet school. We also talked about what was required to get into the university. She's only 13 and still talking about what she wants to be when she grows up, so when this happens I try to give her a firm basis of what to go on, and what she will need to accomplish if she is to realize that goal.

Suzanne teaches basic academic skills by introducing Claire to more difficult books than she would ordinarily read.

Right now she's reading Tolkien. I don't want to lecture to her but I offer her information on the nature of an epic, etc. I'm not sure if this is meaningful to her, because she doesn't express all her feelings to me about what we do.

Other skills are taught as they plan and implement an outdoor adventure project, a two-day bike trip around the lakes.

The purpose of our activities is to do things she's interested in, like biking for example. I suggested the trip because of her interest and I like to go on bike tours. It is also satisfying to see Claire get into whatever we are doing. I'm not sure I'm working with a definable purpose. I'm just going with some general rubric of human development. I suggest an activity based on a list I was given of her interests. I think these purposes are adequate.

I do wonder if we're getting together often enough. Our relationship might gain more depth if we did, but we are getting together as often as we can, which is about two times a month. This summer we did not meet often because she was away at camp, but we are meeting next week. The bike trip was satisfying. It was good to spend two days in constant contact with Claire. I think she enjoyed it too. She seemed to enjoy going over the maps, calculating the distance and camping. I like the idea of being involved in helping, shaping, guiding and giving a younger person the benefits of my experience and wisdom.

Suzanne appears to get a high degree of satisfaction from her role as teacher to Claire. In fact, she also enjoys helping Claire structure a challenge that is quite intense in several respects. It is a new adventure, of prolonged duration, and requires endurance and planning, and some degree of risk.

Suzanne talked about frustrations in relation to her counseling role with Claire, wondering to what extent she should be advising her. This was phrased in terms of role ambiguity.

The only frustration I have is not knowing how in-depth the relationship is or should be. Like I said, this may be based on my own preconceptions, but I wonder if as a mentor I should be

advising her on certain things. For example, she's quite a bit younger than her siblings, and as a result she feels very distant from them. Apart from stating this as a fact, she doesn't seem to want to explore this issue. I don't want to push, but I wonder if I should be advising her.

This role ambiguity is not a stumbling block to Suzanne's effective mentoring role as a teacher, yet she perceptively points to the lack of clarity of role expectations. In this respect her frustration may be considered more a consequence of unclear program expectations than of any personal limitations she might have.

Suzanne also alludes to the problems inherent in the role of confidant, yet again this desire for more intimacy is not an end in itself, and thus not an ultimate goal of the relationship. She states clearly it is a means to further Claire's development.

Our relationship is friendly. Claire is very open with me and we talk about a lot of stuff. I guess we are friends. I feel good about the relationship. We are not real intimate. She doesn't share any problems with me that I can help her solve. This may be my preconception but I think there should be a deeper level to our relationship. I expect more from myself for her, and I guess I expect the same from her. But we are friends.

Another purpose is to get to know each other and become more comfortable with each other so that we can talk more in depth about things. I want to get to know her and what she is interested in.

Five mentors talked in terms indicated that they aspired to develop competence, and five others described how they were implementing this goal. Like Suzanne and Claire, the pairs typically met twice a month or more, almost twice the meeting frequency of the cases at levels one and two. The single pair at this level that terminated focussed on career goals, and ended when the youth enrolled, with his mentor's help, in a more intensive program focussed exclusively on his career interest in law enforcement. Suzanne

shared more examples and a wider range of competencies than the other mentors at this level.

Examples of developing competence fell into three categories. "Teaching basic skills" included efforts to improve conversational skills, such as correcting vocabulary, context and grammar; and increasing literary comprehension, as in the above case study. Examples of "planning for the future" included visiting a hospital to see what doctors do, helping a youth pursue becoming a cook, learning about police work, as well as the instance above of visiting a veterinarian. "Teaching other skills" was the largest category and included involving youth in planning a project, working as a volunteer, and building physical fitness. Project planning included both vague plans placed in the hopper for the future, and detailed plans made and followed over several weeks or months. Outdoor adventure projects were implemented in two cases; project aspirations included building a spaceship model using math, starting a photography project, planning a sketching project, and developing a plan for an art project.

Frustrations stated by mentors at the fourth level included concerns about meetings with the youth and the mentoring roles of counselor, confidant and entertainer, much like mentors' frustrations at the preceding levels. However, Level 4 mentors articulated more frustrations about the advising system than mentors at Levels 1 and 2. Level 4 mentors talked about infrequent contact with advisors and the need for more ideas about what to do with the youth, and in some instances, more training. It appears that mentors who try to develop competence in their protégés not only welcome advice and counsel from professionals, but expect such programmatic supports to help them perform as more effective mentors.

Suzanne gave more examples and described a wider range of competencies than the nine other mentors at Level 4. Her resourcefulness might explain why she did not express a need for more extensive systemic supports. Eight mentors at this level talked about the need for a more extensive support system. Five mentors said they needed more frequent contact with program staff, and in some cases a more efficient and effective use of that time to deal with substantive issues in mentoring. Five mentors said they would benefit from more staff direction about activities they might undertake with their youth. They said staff might organize sessions for mentors to talk together, circulate lists of activities, and arrange meetings for youth and mentors to do activities together.

All these suggestions were incorporated by the program coordinators when they matched control group youth with mentors beginning in the fall of 1989. The mentors at this level had generated a wealth of knowledge to share from their own mentoring experiences. More opportunities to share and reflect on mentoring activities would also help clarify the program expectations that puzzled Suzanne and three other mentors at Level 4.

Levels 3 and 4 - Ted and Adam - Developing Character and Competence

Although each of the levels may be thought of as subsuming the previous ones, the ordering of levels 3 and 4 is not so clear. Not all mentors classified in level 4 spoke of goals that fit under the heading of character. Therefore, a case in which both were explicitly combined seems appropriate to illustrate those pairs in which mentoring, as reported by the mentor, most closely approached the ideal combination we envisioned when initiating the Linking Up program.

Ted and Adam have been meeting for a brief three months. Ted hopes to contribute to Adam's character development, and he prefers activities that allow them to share ideals and values.

(Could you describe particular satisfactions you have experienced as a mentor?) Just seeing Adam develop, learn experiences you had, having him use those experiences. When fishing, he talked about education, and college. I'm trying to go for ideals in him. I'm different than a lot of the mentors, in that they are older. I'm 35, have 2 kids, and moving into a new house.

Ted's advisor reported that topics of conversation between Ted and Adam included family and responsibilities, Adam's 3.6 grade point average in school, his interest in science and math, in computers, and college. Ted spent the first meeting working with Adam to repair his bike for a trip they took on the second meeting.

The first activity was biking. I have had a long interest in biking. My bike is for long-distance touring. Adam had a regular bike that needed repair. So at our first meeting we fixed his bicycle. His bike needed a new rim, but that was too expensive to fix, as it would have cost the same as a new bike. So I borrowed this trueing tool from a friend. He learned how to true a wheel.

In that month's conference report, Ted's advisor described how when Ted arrived on his bike for their next meeting the street echoed with the sound of children calling out to Adam, "He's here! He's here!" Ted said he was pleased that Adam was looking forward to their second activity. They took a 15-20 mile bike ride together. Although Ted started out ahead of Adam, Adam caught up with him. Ted reflected that his protégé had done real well on the trip, and that Adam also gained a feeling of accomplishment by repairing his bike. The advisor ended his notes by reporting that Ted plans to try to do different things with Adam until the youth expresses an interest in learning or doing other things.

Ted typically accomplishes many goals during each meeting. He tries to teach several competencies through each activity, as well as get to know Adam better. He is also sensitive to the difficulties behind each meeting, from identifying Adam's interests to arranging the time in his own personal schedule.

My biggest frustration is trying to figure out what to do, working with a person who is not so forceful, doing something he will be interested in, how to suggest things, how to make my suggestions that he would enjoy. (Is that difficult?) Yes, I don't want him to do it because he thinks I would enjoy it, but rather that he would enjoy it too. He would do something he thinks I would enjoy. (Have you talked with anyone about this?) I have had talks with my wife about this. She says that I shouldn't be too forceful. . . . Another frustration is that I don't have more time. I have two pre-school children. I told the program at first that I was concerned about time. They told me to go ahead.

Ted describes the process he is using to help identify Adam's interests.

I've been trying to use the activities to find out his interests. I'm not there yet. It takes awhile. He is a 15 year old, and doesn't know a lot of things he likes and dislikes. First, he has not done a lot. Hopefully, it won't be much longer and we can find out more what his interests are.

Notice that even though Ted still feels that he is trying to find out Adam's interests, this does not hinder him from providing a challenge early on to the youth, by repairing the bike in the first meeting. Their activities together also demonstrate how Adam can do interesting things without spending much money, by repairing a bike and learning to use the tools involved, and engaging in activities that don't necessarily depend on admission fees.

When fishing, I got to talk to him. I asked him if he would like one thing or another. Like with the bicycle, and the computer. It is tough to find out his interests, cause I do the work. One of the fishing purposes was to talk. I picked everything we've done so far, but I think he wanted to try a lot of things, and still wants to try more.

The advisor reported that Ted describes Adam as being shy. He does not seem to offer suggestions of things he would like to do during future meetings. Because Adam makes no suggestions, Ted offers possible activities that will allow him to teach Adam a new skill. Ted noted the conflict between family time and this community service commitment, and he plans to involve Adam with family activities, with approval from Adam's mother.

I have a lot of ideas about things to do. I have done Boy Scouts and like the outdoors. I have a sunfish boat. He wants to go sailing, canoeing. I am a mechanical engineer, and want to get him in there to see what I do. And then we can find out his interests. I also want to have him play racquetball and ping pong. He wants to be helped, and exposed and I hope to stimulate his interests.

Like a Level 2 mentor, Ted strives to widen Adam's horizons, by opening new possibilities. Ted is resourceful in figuring out how to link Adam with other people to gain competence; he suggested that Adam go to the library to sharpen his typing skills to prepare for computer activities.

Ted also is open to more ideas about possible activities to do with Adam. He suggested that the program generate lists of activities that are conducive to engaging the mentor and the youth in conversations.

Give mentors a real good list of things to do, do a lot of different things. Things where you can talk, talk about what's going on, what's good, what's bad.

Ted and Adam were one of three pairs that functioned at Levels 3 and 4 simultaneously, developing both competence and character. Ted and Adam met at least twice monthly, more frequently than most pairs at this level, the mean being 1.7 for Level 3+4, and 1.2 for Level 4.

The examples of character development in Level 3+4 that emerged from the mentor interviews clustered in two areas: forming ideals and values and building self-confidence. The ideals and values encouraged included: develop-

ing a work ethic; forming values; as well as encouraging honesty and making educational plans (as mentioned in Ted's case). One mentor tried to build the youth's confidence in his individual talents by letting the youth cook for the mentor's friends.

Discussion

Mentors' goals

This exercise helped us diagnose the problem that redirected our study from the question of how mentoring relationships develop to the question of why so many did not. Although a study such as this cannot establish causal connections with certainty, there is a strong association between the failure to establish any mentoring relationship, that is, not meeting regularly and eventually terminating, and the way in which the mentor describes the purposes of mentoring. Of the 10 pairs terminated during the course of the study, six had mentors in the lowest level, concerned primarily with building a relationship. Two more came from the next level in which the main theme was introducing options. Failed matches comprised, respectively, 75 percent and 40 percent of all pairs at the two lowest levels. In contrast, the 18 pairs in the two higher levels (including the combined category) had only two terminations, a failure rate of only 11 percent. (See Table 1.)

Preliminary findings to this effect guided revisions in the recruitment, orientation, and continuing training of mentors for the second round of matches. Unfortunately, the absence of research funds has not allowed us to assess the degree to which these alterations have reduced the problem of mentors having goals that are too vague. However, current program coordinators report far fewer inactive pairs.

Putting our findings in their strongest terms, it appears that in a program such as this (i.e., taking into account the kinds of mentors and youth involved and its purposes), a focus on improving competence is most functional. The criterion used to substantiate this judgment is simply whether the pair continues to meet on a regular basis. A more stringent criterion, such as what impact mentoring has on youth, might reveal additional critical characteristics, but we believe the longevity and regularity criterion establishes a minimum standard. Meeting frequently for several months may not be sufficient, but a mentor is unlikely to have an important impact on a young person if they seldom see each other.

Mentors' frustrations

Table 1 reveals no relationship between the level of a mentor's goals and the number of frustrations expressed. Nearly all mentors reported encountering frustrating situations. However, the nature of the frustrations varied. Mentors at the two lower levels were most frustrated by the difficulties in arranging meetings with their protégés. Few attributed their problems to weaknesses in the Linking Up program. They personalized problems and blamed themselves. Mentors concerned with developing character and competence also found it difficult to arrange meetings, but were more likely than the other group to identify problems with the program, such as inadequate support from advisors and vague expectations. Although the differences are not enormous, they suggest that mentors differ not only in terms of goals but also in terms of how they view their roles. These differences too may affect their ability to establish a mentoring relationship.

Characteristics of youth

Because we concentrated on eliciting and analyzing mentors' accounts of what they did and why, we have not yet had much to say about differences among youth. It is surely plausible to argue that the same mentor might be more or less effective with two different young people. Indeed, two of the mentors in the sample terminated their relationship with the first protégé and then successfully initiated a match with a second.

The baseline survey with which the Linking Up program began collected detailed information on participating youth. For present purposes, however, the only feasible way to characterize the protégés is according to the competence group to which they were assigned in the selection process. Recall that there were four possibilities derived from a two-by-two matrix with academic competence on one axis and psychosocial competence on the other. Subjects were classified as high and low on each axis, yielding four categories: high on both academic and psych-social, low on both, high on psychosocial and low on the academic or low on psychosocial and high on academic. (See Figure 1, p. 11.)

These categories should not be given inordinate weight. They were relatively crude ratings based on a set of indicators culled from the data. Many borderline cases would be hard to distinguish in practical terms. In some cases the data-based classification did not agree with first-hand observation. However, the four groups certainly differed from one another in some important general ways.

When competence group is related to level of mentors' goals, as in Table 2, some general tendencies are visible, but they are not simple. Looking down the first column of Table 2, the largest number of youth in the lowest

TABLE 1

Terminations, Meetings per month, and Number of Frustrations
by Levels of Mentoring Purposes

Level	# of Cases (%)	# Terminated (%)	Mtg/Mo mean	% of Mentors stating Frustrations [mean/Mentor]	<u>Frustration Source</u> # of mentors		
					Mtgs	Role	System
I	8 (26%)	6 (75%)	0.84	100% [2.3]	8	4	0
II	5 (16%)	2 (40%)	1.01	80% [4]	4	3	3
III ONLY	5 (16%)	1 (20%)	1.2*	80% [2.5]	4	2	1
IV ONLY	10 (32%)	1 (10%)	2.31*	100% [2.5]	6	3	8
III + IV	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	1.7	100% [2.3]	3	0	2
III, III+IV, & IV	18 (58%)	2 (11%)	1.93**	94% [2.5]	13	5	11

Total cases = 31.

* one case missing from monthly mean calculation

** two cases missing from monthly mean calculation

competency group is found at the lowest level of mentoring. However, three protégés in the lowest competency group were in mentoring Level 4. The fourth column shows that three youth from the highest competency group were at the lowest level of mentoring, suggesting that it is not solely the young person's competence group that determines the mentor's goals. The termination rate was as high among the most competent youth in the lowest mentoring level as among the least competent.

Youth involved in matches classified at the highest levels of mentoring (3, 4, 3+4) came, with two exceptions, from the three lower competence groups. In fact, the largest cluster in mentoring Level 4 is of youth from competence group 2 -- low psychosocial, high academic. If there is an effect of protégés on mentoring goals reflected in these data, it is for youth with lower psychosocial competence to inspire their mentors to work on improving their competence. (Note that mentors spoke not only of psychosocial competence but also of improving more tangible skills.) This suggests that there may be an optimal match between young people's needs and mentors' orientations.

Considering that the matches of half of the young people in the highest competence group were terminated and that only 2 of the 8 were classified in the higher levels of mentoring, we suspect that a mentoring program, at least of this type, is not appropriate for young people who are basically doing well in school and in their relations with others. The unexpectedly high cost of making and maintaining mentoring pairs also argues against trying to provide mentors for youth who have no obvious need for them. Some mentors with protégés who fit this description became very frustrated that their protégés' busy schedules made meetings almost impossible.

TABLE 2

Youth Competency Group and Level of Mentoring

(Number in parentheses indicates terminated matches.)

<u>Mentoring Level</u>	<u>Youth Competency Group*</u>				TOTALS
	1	2	3	4	
1	4 (3)	1 (1)	0	3 (2)	8 (6)
2	0	1	2 (1)	2 (1)	5 (2)
3	2 (1)	0	2	1	5 (1)
4	3	6 (1)	0	1	10 (1)
3+4	0	1	2	0	3
TOTALS	9 (4)	9 (2)	6 (1)	7 (3)	31 (10)

*Group 1 is low competence, high risk; Group 4 is high competence, low risk.
See Figure 1, p. 11.

Conclusions

Mentors' Roles

We began our investigation with a conception of mentors' roles that was defined by five functions: companion, supporter, teacher, challenger, and role model. Taking an inductive approach to eliciting and analyzing mentors' statements about what they did and why, we derived a hierarchy of purposes with four levels: building a relationship, introducing options, developing character, and developing competence. The two schemata, though having different origins, overlap in ways that reinforce the value of thinking of mentoring in this manner. First, both move progressively from lower to higher levels in terms both of the demands placed on mentors and of the potential impact on protégés. Second, there are parallels between the two.

Building a relationship entails, at the least, spending time together, which is the companion role. In our telephone interviews with protégés, we found it unnecessary even to code this role, because when mentor and protégé got together at all, the mentor acted as a companion. Those interviews also revealed considerable amounts of support being provided by mentors, especially in the social-emotional realm.

The second level of purposes, introducing options, is one kind of teaching. The most serious limitation on this purpose, as described by the five mentors in the category, was that the teaching seemed too one-sided. In the case described to illustrate this level, Sarah wanted Karen to learn about different things women can do, but she did not state this explicitly to Karen as a purpose or ask Karen whether that was an issue she wanted to explore.

Developing character entails support, teaching, and some challenge in the sense of pushing a young person beyond his or her presumed boundaries, encouraging and exhorting him or her to strive harder. Like introducing options, however, the content of teaching is rather abstract and vague. It has to do with broad personal characteristics such as self-confidence.

Developing competence, the fourth level, may be most functional precisely because it entails a concrete focus on things protégés can do. Teaching and challenge are directed toward tangible products that are satisfying in themselves, like repairing a bicycle and using it to take a long trip together.

The mentoring function, role model, has not been illuminated by our study. It is distinctive from the other four because it is not something a mentor can do. A mentor can become a protégé's role model only if the protégé chooses. All a mentor can do is act in such a way that she or he would be pleased to be chosen as a role model. Perhaps in the future some of the youth in Linking Up will look back on their mentors as role models, but at the early stages of the program, while protégés were in their early adolescence, we found no indications of this function. (Despite adults' attraction to the term, adolescents are reluctant to name a single person as a role model, usually insisting that they are unique and pattern themselves after no one.)

Recommendations

Our study has a number of implications for mentoring programs, most of which seem rather obvious by now. However, they were not obvious when Linking Up was being designed and responses from other program staff suggest that they are not obvious to everyone else either. In view of current enthusiasm for mentoring and the proliferation of programs without much guidance from

research, we offer these recommendations in the hope that they will prove useful to program designers and operators.

1. Mentors should be recruited as members of organizations rather than one-at-a-time. This recommendation was derived from our experience in recruiting Cornell alumni and from the very low yield of individual mentors from broadly targeted public appeals. Even in the small town of Dryden, word-of-mouth and personal solicitation failed to identify as many mentors as we needed. Mentor recruiters must also acknowledge the heavy commitment of time and energy that is needed.

2. Mentoring programs should concentrate on youth who need them. One of our initial questions was whether high or low-risk adolescents would benefit most from mentoring. Although we were unable to collect outcome data, we feel confident in making this recommendation for two reasons. First, youth who are doing well in school and are well-connected socially had considerable difficulty simply finding the time to meet with a mentor. Having multiple activities and relations already, they had less to gain from a new connection. Second, mentoring is very expensive. We found that Linking Up required far more staff resources than anticipated.⁵ Principles of fairness demand that scarce resources be devoted first to those with the greatest need. Although this is a well-established principle, campaigns are underway in some communities to find mentors for every young person. We would modify that goal to finding a mentor for every young person who needs one.

3. Mentors need clear goals. The problem Linking Up mentors reported regarding vague goals resulted in part from the demonstration function of the

⁵ Mentoring programs we learned about maintained a ratio of professional staff to matches ranging from 1:10 to 1:40. The lowest ratio implies a "per pupil expenditure" in the same range as most public schools.

program. The investigators intended to provide only broad purposes in order to learn what transpired between adolescents and adult mentors. The term, "competence" was prominently featured in literature on the program. Initial mentor training presented the five mentoring functions and introduced the goals of building character and competence. An intense initial meeting among mentor, protégé, parent, and program coordinator focussed on what the pair would do together, under what conditions, and why. Yet these efforts proved insufficient for many mentors. This point is related to the preceding one. If a program is specifically targeted on youth facing risks to their academic and psychosocial achievement, the goals are relatively clear. A mentoring program that matches a mature woman with a teenage mother need not dwell on what the mentor should try to accomplish. Because our youth population was "normal," protégés' needs and associated goals for mentors were unclear.

4. Building competence is the most functional goal for mentoring. Competence, the capacity to do something well, is concrete enough that both mentor and protégé can get a clear picture of what kinds of activities are likely to build it. Thus, the purpose of their meetings is clearer. Moreover, from our data we conclude that warm interpersonal relations are more likely to result from a focus on building competence than from a focus on building a relationship. The latter is, again, too vague and open-ended. Mentors whose purpose was primarily to build a relationship sounded a little like people in a dating relationship. They worried about whether their protégé liked them and whether they had chosen the right activities. Mentors who wished to become confidants were disappointed when their protégés did not share intimate information after one or two meetings. On the other hand, when protégés did ask for advice on personal matters, other mentors felt inadequate

as counselors. An emphasis on learning to do something, especially when combined with the goal of developing character, seemed to give the right balance.

5. Mentors need continuing support. The number of frustrations listed even by the mentors who appeared to be most successful indicated both the need for further support beyond initial orientation and training and the inadequacy of what Linking Up provided. The advisor system was planned for just this purpose, but, with a few exceptions, the advisors we found proved unable to deliver what was needed. Many of those advisors, we hasten to say, were dedicated and talented. However, not having this function as their main job, they were often unable to make contact frequently enough with mentors. In other cases, mentors did not welcome the contact. Yet when we began interviewing mentors by telephone, many of them found the questions we posed to be thought-provoking. They commented that they had never thought about these issues before and now wished to pursue them further. Some made a point of attending the meetings for mentors that coordinators had offered previously but were not well attended. Attending such meetings gave them the opportunity they sought to reflect on their own experience and to learn how other mentors dealt with some of the same issues they faced.

6. Mentoring programs are rooted in paradox. Mentoring programs are intended to synthesize a natural human process that has undeniable power. There is no doubt that a close nurturing relationship between a wise and caring adult and a youth is beneficial to both. However, the "natural" way this happens is when an adult and youth gradually become close through contact in their daily lives. It is not yet clear that a program can replicate this process by matching an adult volunteer with a young person who has enrolled.

Such an attempt at social engineering is needed because of the extraordinarily dismal conditions facing many youth combined with the extraordinary stresses placed on adults by contemporary society. Under better circumstances, youths' needs would be more modest and more adults would naturally be available to help out. But programs attempting to fill the gap run directly into the problems that created it: busy adults have little time to devote to youth. The more a program demands from a mentor -- number of meetings with protégés, amount of training, reporting on progress, support group meetings with other mentors, conferences with advisors, etc. -- the smaller the number of adults who are willing to volunteer.

7. Mentoring needs a context. Although this point does not come directly from the data reported above, our interpretation of the difficulties faced by mentors in meeting protégés and deciding what to do with them and why resulted from the rather artificial situation of having to pick up the protégé and go somewhere together each time. Mentoring programs based in workplaces have enormous advantages in comparison. The mentor is already there. There are tasks to be done, skills to be learned, people to meet, and things to talk about already built in. The limitation of workplaces as contexts for mentoring is that early adolescents are often not sufficiently interested or focussed to have a reason for choosing one over another. Furthermore, some workplaces will not tolerate the presence of such a young person. Finding the proper context is the greatest challenge with the early adolescent age group. Older youth usually get mentored in workplaces. Younger children are satisfied by the Big Brother/Big Sister approach, which, in our terms, emphasizes companionship and support. Where and under what conditions a mentor can best teach and challenge an early adolescent remains a serious question.

8. Mentoring is worthwhile. There is something wonderful and powerful about a relationship between a caring adult and a youth that we are willing to say is positive in the absence of any "objective" evidence. We cannot doubt that what the best mentors have done with their protégés has been beneficial. The challenge is to maximize the number of mentors who are able to do such wonderful things. If our efforts contribute to that purpose, they will have been justified.

APPENDIX A

LINKING UP PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Faculty

The program's originators and the recipients of the original funding were Professors Urie Bronfenbrenner, Stephen Ceci, Steven Cornelius, and Elaine Walker. Professor Walker left Cornell soon thereafter. Professors Ceci and Cornelius helped initiate the planning for the program and thereafter consulted occasionally. Only Bronfenbrenner has remained actively involved and his role has been primarily advisory. Professor Dale Blyth emerged as director of the project by the time the gift was formally conferred in December, 1986. When Professor Blyth left Cornell in August of 1988, Professor Stephen Hamilton became project director.

Program Staff

Dr. Katherine Voegtle was hired in the fall of 1986 as coordinator, in charge of implementing the Linking Up program. Although she was hired as a part-time person, she soon became full-time, as the demands on the position became apparent. Likewise, when it became obvious that one person could not coordinate programs in both Dryden and Rochester, a half-time position was created in Rochester. Tom Crews and then Kimberley Dobson held that position without being able to carry out the responsibilities to their or our satisfaction under the prevailing circumstances. Therefore, in the fall of 1989, a subcontract was arranged with Community Partners for Youth, which operates Rochester's Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, and Lori Barbagallo, on their staff, became the Linking Up program's half-time coordinator under the supervision of Elizabeth Callaghan, Director of Community Partners for Youth. When Dr. Voegtle left in October, 1989, Ellen Baer, a member of the Learning Web staff, became coordinator of the Dryden program.

Graduate Students

Fred Foster-Clark, Joyce Munsch, and Jon Padgham were all heavily involved in designing and administering the instruments used in the baseline study and in selecting program participants. This research was directed by Dale Blyth. Nancy Darling had the primary responsibility for conducting and analyzing the pilot study of Cornell Students. Dominic Carbone, Jan Noga, and Pam Wallace were also involved.

Process Study Researchers

Dr. Mary Agnes Hamilton had major responsibility for designing and conducting the process study, with the assistance of Suezette Steinhardt, a graduate student, and the following undergraduate students: Christina Aprea, Deanna Chiang, Jennifer Hedlund, and Julie McBeth,

Undergraduate Research and Program Assistants

A number of students worked on various aspects of the project from its inception. Although they cannot all be listed, the following played critical roles: Janet Achenbach, John Gerecitano, Lisa Lilienfeld, Anne Meinig, Alison Regan, Marylou Shannon, Michael Wagner, and Duane Whitfield.

Advisors

The inadequacies of our advising system cannot be attributed to the advisors, who were all both competent and committed. In Dryden we relied upon Mary Ellen Bossack, Henry Chan, Gail Feagles, Audrey Fields, Barbara Hopkins, Susan Rausch, Susan Steigerwald, and Jennifer Werner. Rochester advisors included Nate Brown, Idonia Cannady, Carol DeMace, Dorothy Dobson, Fred Medina, Henry Padron, and John Torella. Elaine Russell played many roles in Rochester; Joe Becker provided excellent administrative and liaison assistance there.

APPENDIX B

THEORY AND RESEARCH ON MENTORING

A Review of Literature

Evaluation Research on Mentoring Programs

Growing awareness that too many parents are unable to meet their adolescent children's needs has generated a host of programs matching youth with adults who are expected to help them become more competent and responsible. While there are many good reasons to support such programs, little or no data may be cited to demonstrate the positive influence of mentors, and the conceptual basis for designing mentoring programs is weak.

Hamilton (1981) found that parents were convinced that their children benefited from The Learning Web, which places youth with adults who can teach them a skill. But he was unable to identify any clear outcomes of the program, in part because the program was a different experience for each participant. An intriguing finding of this study, though it was too small in scale to be generalized, was that about half of the Learning Web participants named their mentor as one of the five most important adults in their lives.

In the United Kingdom, The Grubb Institute has developed a mentoring program for unemployed out-of-school youth that has since been replicated by the London Education Authority and the Manpower Services Commission. Transition to Working Life or TWL joins small groups of unemployed youth with "working coaches," who talk with them about setting goals and achieving them, in addition to doing enjoyable activities together. Relatively informal evaluations, using interviews and researchers' judgments, concluded that more than half of participating youth experienced lasting changes as a result of the program, including attitudinal change such as increased responsibility and

initiative, and behavioral change, principally finding a new job (Grubb Institute, 1981).

Although evaluation data on Career Beginnings have not yet been fully analyzed and publicly reported, Erik Butler, Co-Director of The Center for Human Resources at Brandeis University, which is responsible for the program's national administration, has said that participants graduate, find employment, and enroll in higher education at substantially higher rates than the comparison groups (personal communication). An evaluation of Atlanta's Adopt-a-Student program (Stanwyck & Anson, 1989) found that participants were more likely than comparison group members to enroll in post-secondary education, but no more likely to graduate from high school or be employed (except for those having a good relationship with their "consultants," who had more success finding jobs).

One of the most useful studies of mentoring programs is a report by Marc Freedman (1988) for Public/Private Ventures. Freedman visited five programs linking youth with senior citizens and interviewed 47 pairs of youth and adults. Concluding that such programs benefit both parties and strongly recommending further program development and research, he also provided some useful insights into the workings of mentoring programs. One was a proposed typology of relationships between mentors and protégés. He characterized 10 of the relationships as "non-significant," meaning that the people involved failed to interact regularly and well. The remaining 37 "significant" pairs he distinguished as either "primary" or "secondary" relationships. The 21 pairs with a secondary relationship gave evidence of closeness and considered their relationship important, but defined it as bounded. The 16 primary relationships were just what that term suggests, relationships viewed as

central to the lives of both parties and unlimited by the programs' definitions of their roles. People in primary relationships treated each other like family members.

Flaxman, Ascher, and Harrington (1988) have written a thorough and thoughtful review of literature on mentoring, including both "natural" and "planned," for people in business as well as for "tenacious" youth. They draw numerous useful inferences for programs, including the warning that mentoring is likely to prove a modest intervention, effective only in connection with favorable influences from family, school, community, and workplace. They argue that little is known about the match between mentor and mentee and suggest that what is most critical is not personal compatibility but "the fit between the mentor's resources and the needs of the mentee (p. 40)."

Parents and Others in the Ecology of Adolescent Development

For many years, Bronfenbrenner has been calling attention to the fact that child rearing, which was once a communal function shared by extended families and small close-knit communities, has devolved upon the nuclear family. Simultaneously, the nuclear family has lost some of the resources that make it an effective setting for child rearing. Fathers' and increasingly mothers' work is far less likely to be done at home than it was when most Americans lived on farms. As a result, young people spend less time with their parents and more time in institutional settings, especially school. There and in informal community settings they are more likely to be with peers than with adults. This tendency is exacerbated when only one parent is present in the home.

Like many other concomitants of modernization, this phenomenon has proceeded farther in the United States than in other industrialized countries.

In Two Worlds of Childhood (1970), Bronfenbrenner described the careful attention given by Soviet society to supporting parents through a variety of institutions that foster children's development and contrasted that with the United States' tradition of holding individual families accountable for rearing their children, even when social and economic conditions beyond their control render them powerless to fulfill that responsibly to their own satisfaction or to society's benefit. Ineffective parenting combined with the absence of compensatory societal institutions has been implicated in the distressingly high levels of serious problem behavior exhibited by American youth (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Hamilton, 1987).

Engagement with issues such as these led Bronfenbrenner to call for theory and research on human development that is more likely to inform policy and practice. Under the rubric of The Ecology of Human Development (1979), he has offered a conceptual framework and a set of working hypotheses for that purpose. The framework identifies influences on development from four different levels of the environment, from face-to-face interactions to the surrounding economic and social structure. Some of the propositions and hypotheses Bronfenbrenner stated to flesh out this framework are particularly germane to the topic of mentoring. First is the claim that "activity, role, and interpersonal relation" (p. 22) are key elements in the ecology of human development. This notion reveals the influence of the Soviet psychologist Vygotsky (1978). Following this line of argument leads us to expect that mentors, by extending the range of people with whom adolescents interact and by engaging them in new activities, should have a positive impact on their development.

Bronfenbrenner hypothesized further that development is facilitated by "progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal activity" with other people (p. 60) and by an optimal "balance of challenge and support," (p. 288), thereby suggesting how mentors might behave in order to promote their protégés' development most effectively.

Adolescents' Social Networks

Social network studies (e.g., Blyth, Hill, & Thiel, 1982; Garbarino, Burston, Raber, Russell, & Crouter, 1978; Galbo, 1986) have reported that adolescents name their parents as the most important people in their lives, but that they name more peers than adults, a tendency that increases with age. They suggest that some, but by no means all adolescents have nonparental adults they can turn to for guidance and support, people often called mentors. These studies represent a significant advance over investigations limited to parents and peers. However, they have not examined such critical questions as what adolescents do with the people they consider important and what those people do for adolescents. Hirsch (1981) has called for greater differentiation among types of relationships examined in social network studies, looking into their content, process, and development.

Resilient Children

Studies of "invulnerable" or "resilient" children, who have managed to thrive under circumstances hostile to their development, particularly the absence of effective parents, have revealed that many of them were able to find a sympathetic adult who stood in loco parentis, performing some of the necessary functions that their biological parents did not or could not perform (Werner & Smith, 1982; Garmezy, 1987; Rutter, 1987). This research, which has been concerned primarily with features of individuals and their environments

that protect at-risk children and youth from psychopathology, is reinforced by more applied studies concerned with disadvantaged youths' school performance and avoidance of problem behavior (Lefkowitz, 1987; Wilson, 1987).

Reflecting on this body of research, Rutter (1987) argued strongly that we need to look at mechanisms and processes that protect children and youth from risk, not simply broadly-defined variables associated with resilience.

It makes no sense to label variables as inherently of the direct risk or indirect vulnerability type. It is the process or mechanism, not the variable, that determines the function. (p. 317)

This point is wholly consistent with Bronfenbrenner's advocacy of person-process-context models.

Modeling

Almost by definition, a mentor is a role model (Daloiz, 1987). As the leading exponent of social learning theory, Bandura (1986) has paid the most sustained attention to modeling, defining it more broadly than role modeling. From his perspective, models provide opportunities for observational learning of both successful and unsuccessful behaviors that can, consequently, be either imitated or inhibited by protégés without the cost of firsthand trial and error. In a similar vein, Kemper defines a role model as a person:

who demonstrates for the individual how something is done in the technical sense.... (The role model) is concerned with the 'how' question. The essential quality of the role model is that he possesses skills and displays techniques which the actor lacks (or thinks he lacks) and from whom, by observation and comparison with his own performance, the actor can learn.

These conceptualizations are useful but they have not yet been grounded by empirical studies of adolescents' role models.

Conclusions

Another potential source of literature on mentoring is work on mentors in the workplace. However, in addition to treating only adults, this literature treats mentors primarily as sponsors who can help already competent people make career progress. Mentoring in this context is very different from mentoring youth. (For a treatment of youth learning in the workplace that includes the mentor role and reviews some of the adult career mentor literature, see S.F. Hamilton & M.A. Hamilton, 1989.)

In short, the available literature did not satisfactorily answer the questions we posed. Preliminary results of evaluation studies suggest that mentoring programs have some positive effects on adolescents, but the range of effects examined has been restricted and no attention has been paid to the more process-oriented questions we posed about differential effects and about how the mentoring process operates. Nor have comparisons been made between naturally-occurring mentors and those introduced by programs. Social network studies have not focussed on unrelated adult mentors. The finding that children and youth who thrive despite deprivations often have a single parent or unrelated adult to rely on is encouraging, but it cannot be transferred to lower-risk groups without further verification. We have found no empirical studies investigating young people's choices of role models or interactions with them.

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